

Remarks

No new matter has been added. Entry of the amendment is respectfully requested. It is believed that the claim amendments place the application in condition for allowance. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claim Status

Claims 1-40 are pending in the application.

Claims 30-32, 7, and 9-19 are allowed.

Claims 3-6, 8, 18-25, 33, 36, and 38 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. The Examiner has indicated that these claims would be allowable if amended to independent form.

Claims 1, 2, 17, 27-29, 34, 37, 39 and 40 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,567,358 to Takamatsu ("Takamatsu").

Claim 26 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takamatsu in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,493,364 to Shepherd ("Shepherd").

The Claim Amendments

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 4, which the Examiner indicated as being allowable. It is believed that claims 1, 2, 17, 26, 34, 37, 39, and 40 are thus allowable on that basis. Claims 4 and 27-29 have been cancelled in this Amendment.

Claim 3 has been amended to independent form, incorporating the subject matter of claims 1 and 2, as originally filed.

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Claim 33 has been amended to independent form, incorporating the subject matter of claim 1, as originally filed.

Claim 35 has been amended to independent form, incorporating the subject matter of claims 1 and 34, as originally filed.

Claim 38 has been amended to independent form, incorporating the subject matter of claim 1, as originally filed.

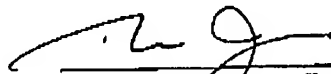
Claim Fees

Please charge fees for four (4) additional independent claim (in excess of three) at \$200 each to Deposit Account No. 09-0428 (Interbold).

Conclusion

It is believed that this Amendment places claims 1-3, 5-26, and 30-40 in condition for allowance. Entry of the Amendment is respectfully requested. The undersigned will be happy to discuss any aspect of the application by telephone at the Office's convenience.

Respectfully submitted,



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